

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Houses constructed under Indira Awas Yojana

*461. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have conducted any review of houses constructed under the Indira Awas Yojana;

(b) if so, the number of houses constructed during last year in Gujarat;

(c) whether the Government are satisfied with the pace of construction of such houses; and

(d) if not, the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The Ministry of Rural Development regularly convenes Meetings with the State/UT Authorities and arrange Workshops with Project Directors of the Districts Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs) to review progress of the programmes including the Indira Awas Yojana (IAY). For this purpose, the Minister of Rural Development has visited several States in recent months and held discussions with the Chief Ministers and other authorities. The Ministry also obtains Annual and Monthly Progress Report from all the States/UTs in this regard and Area Officers of the Ministry have been designated to undertake field visits, hold review meetings and ascertain the status of implementation of various Rural Development Programmes, in order that any bottlenecks being encountered are speedily removed.

(b) to (d) As per the information received from the Government of Gujarat, about 16,578 houses were constructed upto 28th February, 2001, against a target of 17,295 for the construction of new

[18 April, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

houses in the State under the IAY for the year 2000-2001. The latest information indicates that the target for the year 2000-2001 under the IAY has been fulfilled.

SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister the targets of different States in the last three years, and the achievements in that regard. Is the Minister satisfied with the pace of construction and the quality of construction of houses under the Indira Awas Yojana?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, if I read the entire details pertaining to the last three years, it would take a long time. I would place it on the Table of the House. So far as evaluation is concerned, the Central Government, from time to time, holds review meetings with the State Governments. In turn, we also have a review meeting at the DRDA level. We have Regional Monitoring Officers who visit the sites, make inspection, and then give their comments. Then, we take up the matter with the State Governments also. In addition to this, I would like to inform the House that after taking over as the Minister of Rural Development, I have visited 19 States during the last five-and-a-half months, and reviewed the progress of various rural development schemes, including the Indira Awas Yojana, and its implementation. Sir, in certain areas, certain complaints have come with regard to the selection of beneficiaries, with regard to the quality of material that is used, with regard to construction also. As and when we receive complaints, we take up the matter with the State Government and ask them to take immediate action, including punitive action, against the officials. If the hon. Chairman directs me, I can place the details of the complaints received and the action taken in various States, on the Table of the House.

SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Sir, I had asked about the achievement. What was the percentage of achievement? Anyhow, now I would like to know whether there was any representation from the Government of Gujarat regarding giving special targets for construction of houses under the Indira Awas Yojana in the earthquake-affected areas. If 'yes', what is the response of the Ministry?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Mr. Chairman, Sir, as per the information received from the Government of Gujarat, 16,578 houses were constructed upto 28th February. But the latest information, which I received only yesterday, shows that Gujarat had a target of 17,295 houses last year, that is, 2000-2001. We have reached that target. So far as his second supplementary about the earthquake victims is concerned, after getting information from the State Government, we, in the Rural Development Ministry, have taken a decision to allot one lakh houses to the earthquake victims in the State of Gujarat. This decision has been communicated to the State Government. They have been asked to identify the beneficiaries. At the same time, I have also released an amount of Rs. 49 crores from the Rural Development Ministry for the purpose of construction of houses under the Indira Awas Yojana. We are in the process of identifying the beneficiaries, and the work will be taken up by the State Governments and the respective local agencies.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, the Minister of Rural Development has visited several States. It has been mentioned in the statement also. So, I would like to know whether he has visited Rajasthan also for this purpose, and met the Chief Minister. While visiting different villages, I have noticed that these houses are built away from the inhabited areas, far away from the villages. They are not even occupied. Why does not the Government insist on the different State Governments that these houses should be built near inhabited areas so that they are really used by the poor people, for whom they are meant?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, so far as the first query of the hon. Member is concerned, I have visited Rajasthan also, and had a detailed discussion with the Chief Minister and the Rural Development Minister. We exchanged views on various rural development activities, including Indira Awas Yojana. Then, so far as the specific issue raised about the construction of houses away from the inhabited areas is concerned, the House is aware that the identification of sites is done by the local administration and the State Governments. The Central Government does not come into the

[18 April, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

picture. But I go by the spirit that the colonies should be very near to the main village so that there is contiguity and also they are able to avail of other facilities which are available for the common people of the village. I will reiterate the guidelines. The guidelines say that colonies should be near villages only. But if any specific instance is brought to my notice, I can communicate that to the concerned State Government. Otherwise also, I can issue general guidelines to all the concerned States, communicating to them the views expressed by the hon. Members that the colonies should be nearer to the main villages.

SHRI S. RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Sir, I would like to know whether the money of Rs. 20,000/- which is given by the Government under the Indira Awas Yojana is not sufficient to construct a house. It is not enough to construct a house. As a result, the houses at many places have not been completed. Secondly, how many houses have been completed out of the 2.5 lakh houses which have been given to the Orissa Government for the Indira Awas Yojana?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, so far as the 'a' part of the question that the amount of Rs. 20,000 is not sufficient for the construction of a house is concerned, I would like to state that out of this amount of Rs. 20,000, Rs. 15,000 is given by the Central Government and Rs. 5,000 is contributed by the State Government. This amount varies from State to State. In hilly areas, we are giving Rs. 22,000. With regard to the doubts expressed by the hon. Member that the amount is not sufficient, I would say that we have a big challenge before us. We want to help as many people as possible. That being the case, it is difficult to increase the quantum, but, at the same time, the beneficiaries who are selected are also adding some contribution of their own, not in terms of cash, but in terms of *shramdaan* and material procurement, etc. In many places, wherever I visited, I observed that these houses are being utilised by the people, and they are happy about it. Naturally, there will be a demand to enhance the amount. I will be happy to enhance it provided we get enough funds. But we have a huge target. To meet that target itself, we need a huge budget. Keeping that constraint of budget allocation

in view, as of now, we are continuing with the scheme. With regard to Orissa, as per the information that I have with me, as of now, out of the 2,50,000 houses which we have allotted for the cyclone-affected people in Orissa, so far, 64,000 houses have been completed. I may inform the hon. Member that I visited Orissa and had a detailed discussion not only with the Chief Minister but with the Governor also. The Governor took some special interest with regard to this particular aspect, i.e. construction of the houses in the cyclone-affected areas. Recently, the Revenue Minister also met me. They came with a request for additional allocation. I requested them to complete whatever is allocated to them, i.e. the 2,50,000 houses. Once it is completed, we can think about giving additional allocation also because Orissa is badly affected by cyclone.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, in October, 2000, the Andhra Pradesh Government requested the Union Government to allocate 2,00,000 additional houses under the Indira Awas Yojana. This was necessitated because of the heavy damage caused by cyclone and floods in Andhra Pradesh in the last five years. The details of the damage had been brought to the notice of the Committee, appointed by the Union Government, which visited the State to assess the damage. But the Andhra Pradesh Government is yet to hear from the Government of India in this regard. I would like know from the hon. Minister, by what time the order regarding the allotment of additional houses is likely to be issued.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ramachandraiah, generally, when hon. Members put questions, they do not read out the supplementary. They put it orally.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: No, Sir. I was not reading.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But you were reading the supplementary.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: No, Sir. I was looking down.
(Interruptions).

MR. CHAIRMAN: On whom? (Interruptions)

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: I did not read it.

[18 April, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

(*Interruptions*) Mr. Chairman, Sir this question is not so complicated that I should read it.

SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR: Sir, he was looking down to read and is now looking up to the Minister for some redressal (*Interruptions*)

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI: These are the notes for the Budget discussion...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Because I have seen many hon. Members reading out their supplementary. Supplementaries are to be put orally. All right.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, regarding the question put by the hon. Member, Shri Ramachandraiah, it is a fact that the hon. Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh as well as the leader of the Telugu Desam Parliamentary Party in Lok Sabha have written a letter asking for an additional allocation of 2,00,000 houses to the State of Andhra Pradesh. Under the Indira Awas Yojana, we go by certain guidelines which have been evolved over the years. Firstly, we go by the poverty ratio of that particular State. Secondly, we go by the percentage of lack of housing facilities in that State. Going by that standard, we have fixed, in the beginning of the year itself, the quantum of allocation to each and every State. That being the case, there is no scope to increase the allocation to the State of Andhra Pradesh though it is also affected by natural calamities. I have brought this to the notice of the Chief Minister and wrote back to him saying that this year, i.e. the year which has ended on 31st March, it is not possible to make any additional allocation to the State of Andhra Pradesh.

DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: No, Sir. Amongst the States which are doing excellent work under this housing scheme, Andhra Pradesh stands at number one. Utilisation Certificates are also being sent. On that basis we have made a request. The Government is not considering that. So, we have requested the Government to increase the allocation to the State of Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, this is a wider issue, which needs a sort of considered view by all the people concerned because there is a rationale behind what he says. Certain States are performing very well. They are able to spend the money in time and they also send the utilisation certificates. But certain States, for their own reasons, are not able to utilise the funds in time because of paucity of funds, matching grants and also lack of other required support. As of now, the guideline says, go by the poverty ratio and the lack of housing connectivity in that particular State. For example, take the case of Orissa. We have given them Rs. 2,50,000/- But they have not been able to spend because they have not been able to provide the matching grant, because the State's financial position is in a very bad shape. That being the case, suppose you withdraw, there will be a reaction. Same is the case with some other States also. So, unless a broad consensus is evolved, either in the NDC, or, after a thorough discussion with the Planning Commission, a unilateral decision taken by the Ministry in this regard is not going to help. It is a wider issue. There are performing States, and the States which are able to spend the money are asking for more funds. But the States which are backward are saying 'we are backward, give us more funds'. So, Sir, this is the dilemma I am facing.

श्री अहमद पटेल: मान्यवर, मेरे पास जो फिगर्स हैं, जो गुजरात सरकार ने हमें प्रोवाइड की हैं रूरल डेवलपमेंट की ओर से भूकम्प पीड़ित एरिया के लिए, उसमें इंदिरा आवास योजना के तहत 49 करोड़, प्रधान मंत्री ग्रामोदय योजना के तहत 21 करोड़ और प्रधान मंत्री ग्राम सड़क योजना के तहत 53 करोड़ हैं। Especially, it is for earthquake-affected area, मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह राशि आप बढ़ा सकते हैं अर्थक्वेक अफेक्टिड एरिया के लिए क्योंकि अब तक गुजरात सरकार को जो सहायता मिली है सिर्फ 800 करोड़ रुपए की मिली है इन्क्लुडिंग जो रूरल डेवलपमेंट मिनिस्ट्री की तरफ से मिली है? तो सबसे पहले तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या आप यह राशि बढ़ाने के लिए सोच रहे हैं या नहीं?

दूसरे, आपने अभी-अभी बात की इंदिरा आवास योजना के लिए और माननीय सदस्य ने जो प्रश्न उठाया है उसमें उन्होंने कहा है कि जो राशि है, वह कम है। आप कह रहे हैं कि डिमांड ज्यादा है, क्वांटम जो है उससे ज्यादा आप बढ़ा नहीं सकते। लेकिन मेरा मानना है कि जिस तरह से कास्ट बढ़ रही है, यह राशि बढ़नी चाहिए क्योंकि जो भी मकान बने, जरूरी है

कि वह अच्छी क्वालिटी का बने। पैसे कम हों और मकान अच्छी क्वालिटी की न बने तो उसका कोई मतलब नहीं है। तो क्या राशि बढ़ाने के लिए आप सोच रहे हैं या नहीं सोच रहे हैं? और

तोसरे, जो काम हो रहे हैं, मेरा ख्याल है कि जिस तरह से उनकी क्वालिटी होनी चाहिए, वह नहीं होती। तो उनकी मॉनिटरिंग के लिए सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट की ओर से आप क्या करने जा रहे हैं?

श्री एम० वेंकैया नायडु: सर, सोचने में कोई प्रॉब्लम नहीं है, करने में दिक्कत है, पैसे का सवाल है। गुजरात के संदर्भ में सदस्य महोदय ने जो कहा उससे मैं पूरी तरह से सहमत हूँ कि गुजरात के लिए और मदद मिलनी चाहिए। जब हमको वहां से खबर मिली और वहां की प्रिलिमनरी रिपोर्ट मिली तो रूरल डेवलपमेंट मिनिस्ट्री ने खुद इनिशियेटिव लेकर, हमने पहले वहां जाकर 100 करोड़ रुपया केवल पीने के पानी के लिए जो हम सेव कर पाए बाकी स्टेट्स में, वह 100 करोड़ रुपया गुजरात को दे दिया। साथ ही साथ हमने एक लाख मकान बनाने में भी मदद करने का आश्वासन दिया। हमने 49 करोड़ रुपए की फर्स्ट इंस्टालमेंट रिलीज़ की है और बाकी इंस्टालमेंट भी हम रिलीज़ करने के लिए तैयार हैं। साथ ही साथ एक प्रॉब्लम आया, गुजरात गवर्नमेंट ने हमसे रिक्वेस्ट की कि भूकम्प पीड़ित इलाके में 20,000 रुपए से मकान बनेगा नहीं और यदि बन गया तो बनने के बाद भी वह ज्यादा देर तक टिकेगा नहीं। सर, इसलिए उन्होंने रिक्वेस्ट की कि आप 30,000 हमें दीजिए, हम उसमें 10,000 और जोड़ देंगे और 40,000 में एक ठीक तरह का, अर्थक्वेक प्रूफ मकान बनाने में हमको मदद मिलेगी। मगर हमारे पास जो फाइनेंस है, वह सीमित है, इसलिए मैं इस ईश्यू को केबिनेट के पास ले जा रहा हूँ, केबिनेट से मैं रिक्वेस्ट करना चाहता हूँ इसको बढ़ाने के लिए। मैं कोई स्पेसिफिक आश्वासन आपको नहीं दे सकता हूँ, मगर मैं भी महसूस करता हूँ कि 20,000 रुपए भूकम्प पीड़ित इलाके में मकान बनाने के लिए पर्याप्त नहीं है और इसको बढ़ाने की डिमांड रेशनल है। तो केबिनेट से डिस्कस करने के बाद मैं कुछ निर्णय ले सकता हूँ और उसको भी मैं कम्युनिकेट कर दूंगा।

श्री बालकवि बैरागी: मॉनिटरिंग के लिए आप क्या कर रहे हैं?

श्री खान गुफ़रान जाहिदी: मॉनिटरिंग कैसे कर रहे हैं, यह तो बताइए?

श्री एम० वेंकैया नायडु: सर, मॉनिटरिंग के बारे में एक तो डिस्ट्रिक्ट रूरल डेवलपमेंट एजेंसी है, जिला परिषद में इस पर बहस हो सकती है। साथ ही साथ हमारे रीजनल एरिया मॉनिटरिंग ऑफिसर्स हैं, वे हर तीन महीने में, छः महीने में स्टेट में विज़िट करते हैं और एट रैंडम सर्वे करके, इंस्पेक्शन करके रिपोर्ट देते हैं। साथ ही साथ हम सैक्रेटरीज़ को भी वहां

बुलाते हैं, यहां भी एक रिव्यू होता है। साथ ही साथ हम चाहते हैं कि आने वाले दिनों में, अभी यह चर्चा में है, जो चुने हुए जनप्रतिनिधि हैं, चाहे वे विधायक हों या हमारे सांसद हों, उनके द्वारा भी इस पर पर्यवेक्षण करना जरूरी है। यह हमारे कंसिडरेशन में है।

श्रीमती चन्द्रकला पांडे: सभापति जी, मैं इससे जुड़ा हुआ प्रश्न पूछना चाहूंगी। एक महिला संगठन से जुड़ी होने के कारण मैंने एक छोटा सा सर्वेक्षण किया था जिसमें पाया था कि इस क्षेत्र में कुछ घर वीमेन हैडिड फेमिली वाले हैं। तो मैं जानना चाहती हूँ कि क्या ऐसे परिवारों का सरकार कोई सर्वेक्षण करना चाह रही है जो वीमेन हैडिड हैं और क्या उनकी राशि बढ़ाने की कोई योजना है?

श्री एम० वेंकैया नायडू: ऐसा कोई अलग प्रोविजन करना संभव नहीं है मगर मैं सदन को एक बात बताना चाहता हूँ कि —

If there is a family headed by a woman, we have made it mandatory that the title of the house, including the site, should be given in the name of the woman. If there is a normal family, it should be in the names of both the persons. But, unfortunately, the evaluation studies conducted by some independent organisations have revealed that both the names are not being given in many cases. We are reiterating to the States once again that they should take steps. I go a step forward. Even in a normal family, the first name in the title can be that of the woman and the second name can be that of the man, for the simple reason that even if the man has got some weakness, normally, no woman allows her house to be mortgaged or sold to somebody. That being the case, we are insisting on this provision that the title should be in the name of the woman and the second name can be that of the man.

SHRI SHANKAR ROY CHOWDHURY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would request the hon. Minister to give information on two issues. If it is not available right now, I shall appreciate if he can give it later.

First, what is the progress in respect of the houses to be built under the Indira Awas Yojana? Following the floods in West Bengal, what is the progress? What targets were set, and what has been achieved? This is my first question.

Secondly, I remember, way back in 1995 or 1996, when Shri Narasimha Rao was the Prime Minister, there was a proposal

[18 April, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

that houses would be constructed under the Indira Awas Yojana for war widows. Is there any progress on it?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, you know that it is a different question. Still, since the hon. Member has asked for a specific information with regard to West Bengal and with regard to allotment of houses to war widows, I will collect the information and pass it on to the hon. Member at the earliest.

Controversial books on Ramakrishna Paramahansa

*462. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have requested the authorities of Encyclopaedia Britannica to delete two controversial books on Ramakrishna Paramahansa from their reference list;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the said authorities have not responded; and

(c) if so, what other measures Government propose to take?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYASAGAR RAO):

(a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I humbly regret the reply of the hon. Minister. He has not been briefed properly about the facts in this regard. This is a very serious issue. Much water has flowed under the bridge.

I may draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the action initiated by the hon. HRD Minister, Prof. Murli Manohar Joshi, in moving the International Court of Justice to delete those two controversial books. One is *Kali's Child: The Mystical and the Erotic in Life and Teachings of Ramakrishna*, and the other is *Ramakrishna Revisited: A New Biography*. Joshiji has categorically stated that the Indian Government has written to the Encyclopaedia Britannica authorities, requesting them to delete the two controversial books